

NEWS FROM INDONESIA

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The Netherlands Indies Become "Indonesia"

An amendment to the Dutch constitution has made "Indonesia" the official name of the former Netherlands East Indies. This change took effect on September 20. Other constitutional revisions legalized plans for formation of a sovereign United States of Indonesia and a Netherlands-Indonesian Union.

The area's government will be known as the Indonesian Government and the Lieut. Governor General will be known as the Lieut. Governor General of Indonesia.

Muso Long Groomed as Top Red Leader

Until his return to Java on August 12, after spending 22 years in Moscow, Muso had seemed only a minor and forgotten figure in Indonesian Communist circles. Other leaders like Alimin and Sardjono were active in Malaya, China, Australia and Palestine. But Muso is believed to have stayed in Moscow since he went there after the abortive 1926 Communist-led revolt on Java.

Reports from persons living in Moscow at the same time as Muso explain why he has now been made head of Indonesia's Communists. These reports show Muso to be well equipped to head his forces in the Communist-held Republican city of Madiun.

Muso's first visit to Moscow was in 1925, when he and Alimin asked Stalin to aid a revolution in Indonesia. Muso was in Singapore when the revolt took place in 1926, but when it failed he made his way back to Moscow via Canton.

Early in 1927 Muso began a training course believed to have been more intensive and complete than that given to any other foreign Communist leader. It is said that Stalin took a special liking to Muso and that he foresaw the day when Muso could be a key Communist leader in South East Asia.

Muso began his studies in the Lenin Institute, a school intended for leaders from Western countries. Lacking the necessary training for this school, Muso was soon transferred to the Sun Yat Sen University, where trainees from colonial areas usually enrolled. There he completed a two-year course, whereupon he entered the Academy of Red Professors, a school reserved for none but top political leaders and usually attended only after many years of previous training.

After receiving high honors at the Academy of Red Professors, Muso is believed to have studied at the Srunse Military Academy, which trained high staff officers and gave courses in the tactics of insurrection and guerilla fighting.

Persons familiar with the education given to other foreign Communist leaders say that Muso's training was unprecedented in its thoroughness and duration and conclude that Muso must rank among Stalin's most trusted agents.

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Republican Premier Hatta's announcement on September 16 that Tan Malakka had been freed from prison gave rise to reports that the Republic might enlist his support against Muso's Communists. On the same day at Surakarta Tan Malakka's Trotzkyite forces clashed with local Communists.

Tan Malakka (whose full name is Ibrahim M. gelar Datun Tan Malakka) had been placed under house-arrest in March, 1946, for attacks on the Republican Government's policy of negotiating a settlement with the Dutch. He was imprisoned in June, 1946, after organizing an unsuccessful coup and the kidnapping of Sjahrir, then Premier.

Tan Malakka, together with Dr. Muwardi, is now a leader of the Gerakan Revolusi Rakjat (G.R.R. - People's Revolutionary Movement), with a policy indistinguishable from that of the Communists except in its opposition to Russian interference. Tan Malakka was a leader of the 1926 revolt and until that time was a Communist, having attended the Eastern University at Moscow.

In 1925 at Canton he wrote a pamphlet entitled "Towards the Republic of Indonesia," earning him the nickname "Father of the Republic." The same year in Tokyo he wrote another pamphlet carefully blueprinting the scorched earth tactics used in 1947 by Republican Premier Sjarifuddin, a confessed Communist.

Tan Malakka spent the war years at Tokyo, returning to Java in 1945. He then organized a Peoples Front party advocating complete nationalization of all property and uncompromising opposition to agreement with the Dutch. His attacks on Sjahrir's government caused disaffections from the Peoples Front and led to his arrest.

His new party is made up of eight extreme Left-wing groups all opposed to the Renville Agreement but also opposed to the Communists. The party has in the neighborhood of 70,000 members including a strong armed force.

On August 16 Republican President Sukarno pardoned and released from prison several G.R.R. leaders who helped Tan Malakka with his attempted coup in 1946. On September 2 Sukarno met with Dr. Muwardi of G.R.R., presumably to discuss co-operation with the Hatta government.

Indonesian Facts and Figures

Area: 733,000 sq. mi. = to Mexico ** Population: 75,000,000** Java's population: 48,000,000; 1000 to the sq. mi. ** Republican territory includes 25% of Java, 80% of Sumatra, totaling about 160,000 sq. mi. ** Republican population: 25,000,000** Of prewar Indies exports, about 20% came from present Republican territory. ** Of world's prewar tin supply 15% came from Indonesia; of rubber 40%; of tea 20%; of copra 30%; of palm oil 25%; of quinine 90%; of kapok 70%. ** Federal Territories and other non-Republican areas, with 570,000 sq.mi. and population of 50,000,000, include the states of East Indonesia (Celebes, the Moluccas, Bali, other islands. Total population 12,000,000); West Java (population 12,000,000); West, East, South Borneo; East and South Sumatra, the island of Madura and the tin islands of Banka, Billiton and the Riouws.

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